DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 083 449 CE 000 462

AUTHOR Even, Mary Jane
TITLE What We Know About Adult Learning and What It Means to the Adult Educator--With Emphasis on Learning in Groups.
PUB DATE [73]
NOTE 42p.; Paper presented before Research Committee of Adult Education Association, Nov. 1, 1973

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; *Adult Educators; *Adult Learning; Adult Students; Group Behavior; *Group Dynamics; *Group Instruction; *Leadership Qualities; Leadership Responsibility; Literature Reviews; Objectives; Program Planning; Psychological Characteristics

ABSTRACT

The literature and research on adult learning in groups is reviewed in this paper. The adult educator must develop expertise in understanding leadership as it relates to groups so he can provide for the evolution of group cohesiveness in the curriculum development process. He must strive to organize varied group interaction and action opportunities to select learning experiences which facilitate both individual and group learning effectiveness, and to recognize that each adult educator as instructor is also a member of the groups he leads. A nine page bibliography is included. (KP)

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT ADULT LEARNING AND WHAT IT MEANS TO THE ADULT EDUCATOR

- with Emphasis on Learning in Groups

by

Mary Jane Even, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
University of Nebraska

In adult education "the characteristic focus has been on the individual man, but the characteristic context for efforts on behalf of the individual has been a group. Shifting the emphasis from the individuals composing the group to the group as a thing in itself is a sad and late perversion of the American ideal, partly to be explained by misuse of the finding of the psychologist about the forces at work in group situations and the ways in which they can be directed to consolidate the group qua group. Larger wisdom would seem to dictate that increased understanding of how groups work should be used to make them work better for the benefit of the Individual" in the learning setting. (47)

Statement of Purpose

While adult educators recognize the need to consider, indeed to involve, make use of and design their programs with the needs and experiences of each individual adult learner as their concern, they also recognize that many of the designs of learning experiences, for which they are responsible, include bringing the individual learners together in groups. The fact that individual learners operate in groups creates the need for educators to re-analyze 1) the processes, methods, techniques they use with groups of learners, as well as, 2) how they plan goals for ~~our~~ programs, diagnose needs of learners for programs, identify measurable objectives, develop content, carry out and evaluate programs for groups of adult learners, based on the implications of known knowledge of group phenomenon.

Though they be instructors, administrators, program directors, leaders, or members, educators are daily confronted with group situations. In this, they continually seek innovative means to cope with the fact that when individual adults come together something new and different happens. Even as they face adults daily, individually, in a dyad (group), group phenomenon occurs as they exchange their concerns, feelings and goals. Group phenomenon takes the form of interactional awareness that pressures, social norms, power, status, ranking, leadership exists between the two persons. As it appears it must be dealt with in the dyad conversation during the orientation, transaction and continued interaction.

What happens to, with, for, around and because the learner enters a group learning setting? Understanding, and using the knowledge about, group phenomenon would help decrease the risks which they as educators take daily as they join or lead a group. Knowledge has been advanced in many disciplines from

which they can gain this understanding. A review of the literature would facilitate this process. However, and in addition, an application and interpolation of the literature would also facilitate the transportability and direct usability of the knowledge.

It is the intent of this paper to facilitate the understanding and application of known knowledge regarding adult learners in groups through a review of the literature and research of adult education and contributing fields of study.

Putting the emphasis on adult learners in groups and the implications for the adult educator helps delineate the focus. More specifically, however, the focus is on "learning" within the psychological realm and "learning group" in the instructional realm. (See 42) So the paper will focus on the psychological concerns of adult learning groups from an instructional viewpoint.

Background

Two areas of interest are examined in this section to provide the reader background regarding the literature contributing to the study of groups. One examines the historical accourts of the development of groups as a field of study and identifies one means of codifying the voluminous amount of information on this topic. The other examines the evidence which demonstrates quite clearly that the practitioner has played a large role in assisting and facilitating research with groups to move forward in many areas.

Related literature on the study of groups is so vast as to be almost inexhaustible. It is so because of the direct and related information contributed from many fields. There are few fields which could not tell educators something about groups, their functioning, culture, memberships, controls, status,

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N.B. This paper was read before Research Committee of Adult Education Association, November 1, 1973. Portions set off by doted lines were deleted in the reading due to time limitations.

composition, leadership, orientation, purpose, goals, cohesiveness, integration, history and others. These include sociology, social psychology, educational psychology, psychology, rural sociology, communication, speech, journalism, social work, community services, community development, history, counseling, physics, engineering, political science, business, management and administration, philosophy, anthropology, architecture, agriculture, economics, urban and regional planning and others.

As this researcher identified with awe such an arena of knowledge, a need to put all this information into perspective became evident. For not only was the literature in other fields becoming unworkable, but also within the two primary research areas of sociology and social psychology, there were differences of opinion philosophically, psychologically and sociologically as evidenced by the theoretical orientations of practices.

To be more specific, prominent researchers in the field of social psychology have emphasized the social side of social psychology, others the psychological side and some their interrelations. At least five new social-psychological text books have been printed since 1968 in which the authors have provided their views of how this area of study ought to be organized.

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A book by Bennis supported the view that "scientific study of interpersonal relations" should be moved from the periphery to the center of social psychology, making it a truly social psychology. He and his collaborators believed that "the scientific study of interpersonal relations lags woefully behind the other areas of social research." (10)

Lindgren's text examines the means by which social psychologists conduct research, gather, organize and perceive data, and construct, review and evaluate theories. The psychological character of the information presented and the

psychological orientation of the volume emphasizes social realities and usefulness of knowledge. He shows an awareness however that sociology has contributed to the study of behavior of an individual. (84)

Sherif and Sherif's 1969 text recognizes that the "thriving activity in social psychology does not come entirely from within the discipline . . . rather from the increased urgency of human problems faced by men of practical affairs who have turned to social sciences with questions and needs for investigations." Human groups, their organization, leadership and followership, morale, power relations and communication channels are component concerns of their book in which an interdisciplinary approach has been utilized. (117)

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In addition, until recently some social psychologists have concentrated on interpersonal relations, others on study of groups per se, others on social attitudes and some on the study of individuals and culture--each were exclusive of the other topics. Presently there seems to be an awareness that there must be an interchange between knowledge of the individual and the socio-cultural interactional forces in which he exists. Most of the authors today include and recognize some research data from other relevant research emphases.

On the other side, the social scientist (Miles) also has turned his attention to small group research because as a "humanist (he) has been struck by the intimate and pervasive interrelation between the individual--his growth, his beliefs, his values and his habitual way of acting and feeling--and the groups which surround him." His groups are so fundamental to his "life space" that their existence is taken for granted and their dynamics and properties are rarely considered consciously. (90)

Sociologists have spent considerable energy studying interaction in family groups, gangs, work groups, military units and voluntary associations. (93)

Whereas psychologists have directed their attention to many of the same kinds of groups, concentrating on the ways groups influence the behavior, attitudes and personalities of individuals and the effects of these characteristics on group functioning. (85)

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Cultural anthropologists have contributed data on groups living under different conditions. Political scientists have studied the functioning of legislative groups, pressure groups, and effects of group membership on voting. These and other disciplines may be cited for the study of groups has wide significance throughout the social sciences and beyond. (94)

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The breadth of the literature and research demands some means of codifying the information. What is needed is a way to sort out the literature in a broad manner, be able to account for literature of more than one discipline, practice or process, and be able to visualize in the end the interrelationships between the categories.

After extensive reading the author found within the literature of Group Dynamics and specifically the work by Cartwright and Zander (1968 revised) a workable format for codifying the material.

> Group Dynamics in one sense is a field of inquiry dedicated to advancing knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development, and their interrelations with the individual, other groups and larger institutions. (23)

Group Dynamics need not be associated with only one discipline or practice, rather it's goal is to provide a "broad scientific base for ideology and process." It permits an interdisciplinary and innovative approach to both interpreting the data on groups and applying the data.

The format for codifying the literature is derived from the three prominent ways in which the study of groups have become popularized as group

dynamics since World War II. These are Group Action, Group Technique and Group Inquiry.

Group Action. One frequent usage of the term group dynamics refers to a type of

> Political ideology concerning the ways in which groups should be organized and managed. This ideology emphasizes the importance of democratic leadership, the participating of members in decisions and the gains both to society and to individuals to be obtained through cooperative activities in groups. The critics of this view have sometimes caracicatured it as making 'togetherness' a virtue advocating everything be done jointly in groups that have and need no leader because everyone participates fully and equally.

Recognizable leaders of this move are Biddle and Biddle, Beal, Bohlen, and others.

Group Techniques. A second use of the term group dynamics refers to a set of techniques,

> such as role playing, buzz-sessions, observation and feedback of group process and group decision, which have been employed widely in training programs designed to improve skill in human relations and in the management of conferences and committees.

These programs are identified with National Training Lab in Bethal, Maine. Lippitt, Miles, Phieffer and Jones, are recognizable leaders of this move.

Group Inquiry.

> The third usage of the term group dynamics refers to the field of inquiry dedicated to achieving knowledge about the nature of groups, and laws of their development, and their interrelations with individuals, other groups and larger institutions. (23)

Researchers working to develop the field of inquiry are Getzel, Thelen, Boyd, Davie, Watson, Cartwright, Zander, Newcomb, to name a few.

It is within these three popular approaches to the study of groups--group action, group techniques and group inquiry--that a better understanding of the scope of research that has been devoted to groups can be developed. This format enables educators to include various types of research, both practical and

theoretical within its boundaries. It is a means for the educator to deal with the study of groups.

It is important to recognize another dimension of the problem however. By noting the differences, the author hopes to have helped clarify understanding and communication about three quite distinct usages of group dynamics and the literature associated with it. In point of fact, all three usages are generally given the same name in daily conversation. However, each one of the types has an ideology about the manner in which groups should be organized. Each has a body of knowledge and research inquiry procedures. Each has been used interchangably by persons, not informed on groups, which has been a retardent force in general understanding and research progress.

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The emergence of these popular uses of group dynamics since World War II was preceded by years of research progress on the study of groups as a whole. Their emergence were based on factors which influenced in a similar way the research on the study of groups in 1920. Four significant trends were occurring about 1920. a) Great value was being placed on science technology, problem solving and progress. b) Professions, such as social work, administration, education, psycho-therapy were developing which recognized the need for further knowledge of groups. c) There were developments in social sciences which indicated that "man, his behavior and his social relations could be subjected to scientific investigations and the research means were becoming available. d) The potential applicability of the findings were paramount as persons became increasingly responsible for improving the functioning of groups and human life in general. (23) During the 1920-30, great energy was placed on research by industry.

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As was noted at the outset, the practitioner has played a large role in the development of research and literature on the study of groups. One base upon which the broader view of the study of groups developed was from the more practical view in the development of the professions. Adult educators among others provided "some of the most influential early systematic writings about the nature of groups." A few of these were: Eduard C. Lindeman; Joseph K. Hart; Dorothy Fisher; Everett Martin; Basil Yeaxler; Richard Livingston; Harold Laski. Their motivation was practicality.(28) Adult educators were encountering problems relative to the voluntary participation in adult programs. The teacher was becoming a group leader who affects learning rather than only a subject matter specialists. However "generalizations can go only so far and then systematic research is required to produce deeper understandings of group life." (23)

Researchers began working with educators and others to build a body of supportive data. That data can be identified within the three categorical types of group dynamics in adult education literature and literature contributing to that field. Krietlow and Jensen exhorted the profession to come of age and develop an understanding and application of known knowledge in other fields. (78, 64) The study of groups is one area of known knowledge. This paper deals with that information which is significant to groups in which adult learners are the members.

Specific Concerns of this Paper

In order to develop an understanding and application of known knowledge regarding adult learners in groups there is a need to:

1) Identify the way learning is perceived to take place.

It is recognized that learning is an individual process in which new insights occur in a person's cognition and field of experience and this insight brings about alterations in the pre-verbal, non-verbal or overt behavior of the learner.

Learnings are reaffirmed or crystallized, altered in condition or are latently influenced by insights gained through our experiences. To separate out learning as a component separate from the experience of participating in a group would alter the concept of adult learning. Rather, because adults are in groups to learn, there are greater numbers and alternative insights which will come about in the learning process.

The presence of adults in groups, for learning transactions, provides a basis for application. It is, "How can adult educators provide a group learning climate to best enhance the insight of individual learners?"

2) Come to agreement on what is an adult, and a group.

For purposes of this paper an adult is defined as one who had come into that stage of life in which he has assumed responsibility for himself and usually for others and who has concomitantly accepted a functionally productive role in his community. (131) A group from an educational view is a methodological approach employed when it is more convenient and desirable to collect individuals into groups for instructional purposes. From a social psychological view, a group is a collection of individuals who have relations to one another that make them interdependent to some significant degree. (23) By accepting these broader definitions, the adult-group-learning setting is broadened. By broadening the adult-group-learning setting, a wider base for applicability of the theory and data on groups included in many disciplines is provided.

3) There is also a need to provide for recognition of a) the common concerns of adult educators and practitioners, b) the emphasis for needed research as identified by practitioners who have written overviews and "how-to" or experiential reports in the field, and c) to recognize the efforts of adult educators who have developed, based on current research, guides for our field of practice.

What are the common concerns of adult educators/practitioners? To arrive at these common concerns the roles of adult educators/practitioners as well as

the program planning processes and the curriculum development processes were examined. It is the author's contention that knowledge about groups would be most helpful when the adult educator/practitioner

> "Selects the leadership and performs as a leader,"
> "Involves learners in planning the program,"
> "Designs the methods and techniques,"
> "Selects the learning experiences,"
> "Carries out the learning experiences in groups," for the adult program or agency.

Though applicable, it is this researcher's opinion that "need diagnosis," "objective formulation" and "evaluation" are individual concerns brought into or performed within the group by individuals, and that these process steps are already identified, as they interact in a group, through "learner involvement in planning" in groups and the "learning experience" itself.

The number of expressed needs for research as identified by practitioners who have written overviews of research and "how-to" or experiential reports in the field has been rather small, however, the unreported and inferred needs have been quite numerous.

When Wilder's chapter appeared in deS Brunner's 1959 Overview of Adult Education Research (31) it was one of the first specific formal collection in which the field integrated current findings from other disciplines and sought theoretical answers to questions. Research reported was broad in theoretical focus and applicability. Questions remained that were basic to the field. This was due in part to the fact that the study of groups per se had only a few years prior taken hold as a source of empirical study though other research had progressed for 20 years.

This is demonstrated more vividly by the publication of the 1960 NSSE Yearbook on Dynamics of Instructional Groups. "The translation of socio-psychological knowledge into educational practice is now under way," Jensen

indicated in the opening chapter. Knowledge is numerous due to the work on face to face groups, formal organization and communities. The translation of the knowledge is difficult, however it is vital, because at the heart of educational practice is the instructional group. (66)

By 1968 Krietlow (79) was asking specific questions and relating these to theoretical frameworks. Using the adult learner, the adult in a social-psychological (and cultural) setting and the institutions as three frameworks, he choose to approach research problems from an "application" view.

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The questions he raised were specific:

> What are the most appropriate conditions for adult learning? What are the functional relationships between successful group action and individual learning? What are the most effective conditions for learning as an individual or part of a group? To what extent does group involvement influence the quality and quantity of learning? What factors prompt adult participation in learning activities individual and groups? Can the attitudes of a group toward that which is being taught be made more positive? Does the atmosphere of the group affect attitudes toward learning? Are an individual's attitudes more difficult to change if group anchored? Can they be changed through group action? To what extent must the objectives change?

All the while and before this period, 1959, to the present, practitioners were preparing books on how to use groups effectively, how to lead groups, lead discussions, be a good leader, manage conferences, seek cooperation, build cohesiveness, and use large groups well.

However, it appears that today adult educators have stopped asking more research questions and have become more oriented toward the application of the existing theory. The research questions on group research have not stopped however. More than ever the fields of social psychology, sociology and others are closing the gap of knowledge.

Through personal inquiry among colleagues to find out "who are the adult educators engaged in group research," this writer found only a few. In response

to a question, "Are we leaving the work to other fields," these colleagues concurred. One offered this impression: "Research conducted on groups offer great operational difficulties in identifying the variables relevant and controlling them." Another indicated that the tremendous research being done by the National Training Lab and like groups interested uman relations offer the educator substantial information regarding groups. Another indicated that community development and education programs have sought many applicable answers for adult educators. (31, 78) It becomes apparent then that even within the adult education field there are proponents of the three conceptual entities of group dynamics: that of group inquiry as shown by concerns for base research; group techniques as shown by references to National Training Lab; and group action as shown by reference to community development work.

There are at present two forces at work in the adult education field which would create the lack of study on groups. One is the emphasis placed by adult educators on research dealing with individuals and on programming for special groups. Another is the fact that adult educators have come of age and are beginning to successfully translate the known knowledge from supporting disciplines into the knowledge base of adult education rather than conducting research. (78,64)

However, it is important to recognize the efforts of adult educators who have developed, based on research, guides for the field of practice. One becomes acutely aware of the impact of persons such as J. Roby Kidd, Malcolm Knowles, Jack London, Harry Miller, Howard McClusky, Alan Knox, Wilson Thiede, Coolie Verner, Herbert Thelan, Jack Gibb, Gale Jensen, Robert Boyd, Ronald Lippitt, Allen Tough, Burton Krietlow and <u>many</u> others who have helped build the knowledge of our field in the area of instruction of learners alone and in groups, and stimulate continued thought on the role of groups in adult instruction.

In this section an effort has been made to present the questions, limita-ıs, assumptions, terms, and identified bases upon which research of groups

can be viewed in adult education. Much more could have been said but limitations were necessary. In the next section examples of research pertinent to the field, and how they apply to the concerns of the adult educator shall be provided.

Current Research Literature on Groups

Five areas have been identified in which adult educators might find the research about groups most helpful. These are: 1) leadership--selection and performance; 2) clientele involvement in planning; 3) designing methods and techniques; 4) selecting the learning experience; 5) carrying out the learning experiences in groups. These were selected because they appear from a review of the adult educator/practitioner roles and functional processes to represent common concerns for application.

In this review, information applicable to these topics will be selected from research and literature from each of the conceptual areas of the field of group dynamics--group action, group techniques and group inquiry. As each of the five areas are reviewed some overlap will occur. However, as the reader is aware the literature is vast. After reading some 400 reference books, journals, reviews, and recognizing all of them could not possibly be shared; the following approach was selected to provide information and apply it.

Each section begins with a basic premise, which has been gleaned from the review of literature, which is then applied and defended. The author has choosen to develop the sections on leadership and clientele involvement more fully than the sections on methods and techniques, selecting learning experiences and carrying out learning experiences. The rationale for this will become apparent to the reader in that the framework for working with groups is set up via research and literature in the first two sections and the last three

sections provide supportive information to enhance working with groups. The reader will also note the interrelationships of the section topics and their relation to the program planning and curriculum planning processes.

Leadership

Ever since the Overstreets detailed the conceptual framework for leadership styles, educators have viewed leaders by category (type) always seeking, it seems, those elusive qualities of the democratic type of leader. Indeed much literature in adult education defames the authoritarian or laissez-faire type.

> It is this author's premise that an adult instructor makes use of all three conceptual types of leadership when working with adults in groups. It is the psychological orientation toward learning, the reason for the instructional group, and the institutional functions that grounds the instructional style and functions--not type of leadership.

Great parallels have been drawn between the democratic leader and the psychological theories related to learning of Rogers, Maslow, Combs and others advocating concern for the individual. As the author considers herself more cognitive field theorist than any other, these theories have been linked with the philosophical theories of Lindeman and Reid.

Whether adult educators like to admit it or not, they find more relevance in the cognitive-field theory of learning than other theories. For indeed if they do as they say--accept the adult as the central focus, recognize experience and background, life style, time and need centered concerns in the programs--they should not be inconsistent by accepting another theory and the fact that content is all and only one kind of content is relevant. Rather they recognize transfer and generalizability of information based on experience and they believe man can determine his problem--his needs for being in the course or program--indeed the learner has come voluntarily into a new learning experience. He has made a choice to improve himself; he is basically good.

What actually happens when they teach? What do adults want? Two recent practical experiences have shown this author that indeed adults want instructors to be democratic leaders in that the process and content should come from their individual-group opinion to be meaningful and based on their problems. "It is the joint responsibility of the teachers and learners to create a climate which allows the learner to accept the experience as learningful." (45)

Once these goals have been set jointly "the learners must be freed to look at the experience. The learner must be able to explore alternative solutions. The learner must have feedback about the progress toward goals." (45)

When the problem has been determined by learners and with learners, a leader has several routes depending on the reason for the group. In an instructional group, learners wish to be involved in arriving at the answers but they want direct support in arriving at potential solutions. The adult does not want to waste time so wishes to have pertinent resources, to have feedback on his views and be directed to the extent that it is discussed and not told. He recognizes the educator as an authority in the content or he would not be an instructor. The learner also doesn't like to be shown he is so unfamiliar with the topic. He builds confidence and self concept in his ability to learn as the instructor demonstrates the relationship of his experience and the content.

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Two examples of this problem:

> An architect who teaches adults at night in Ontario told the author he provides a comfortable--as he termed it laissez-faire--view of learning by chats, has coffee, sets a relaxed climate for his learners. He handles the maintenance of his course, the planning of content, the method is a democratic way, but he says "not one of them wants me to be laissez-faire or democratic when I help them build a house on paper. They want me to tell them that the foundation does come first not the roof." These were his terms. What he was saying is that his view of how people learn in <u>his profession</u> is by being provided content directly and correctly after they as learners come to grips with their needs. He provides for both the task and maintenance of the group. He sees these as his functions.

> This author has recently been asked to help design a continuing education program for physicians in Nebraska. The needs are attitudinal and cognitive. When suggesting that small group discussion be one method, over time, to change attitudes, the director of the project said,"Medical doctors will not stand for that approach." They want to be told about the data and make their decisions. Anyone who has experienced this will recognize, whether right or wrong, the leader style with which physicians are accustomed and which they use is not democratic and justifiably so for them in this role.

Those readers who have read Harris' book I'm OK You're OK (54) might see physicians as the Parent and their patient as the Child. From this view, educators hope they are working with Adults. Perhaps by recognizing that they are not always approaching Adults when they enter the group may put a new light on their approach. Is the role of leader to make learners Adult, right or wrong? The author doesn't know. However it gives us pause to view adult learners in this way as educators determine the approach they take as leaders.

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Indeed, the literature and research on leadership demonstrates that there is a shift from the types of leadership to the functions or styles of leadership. (34) This is due mainly to the fact that the only conclusion which receives even fairly good support in one which indicates that "leaders excel non-leaders in intelligence, scholarship, dependability and responsibility, activity, social participation and socio-economic-status." (23) The belief that a high level of group effectiveness can be achieved simply by the provision of 'good' leaders (democratic), though still prevalent among many people concerned with management of groups," now appears naive in the light of research findings. (23, 86)

Kahn and Katz have summarized findings from several studies which obtained data about the performance of a variety of workgroups and characteristics behavior of each group's supervisor. (69) (Also see Krech and Crutchfield and Redl) They concur ; there is a new view of leadership emerging which stresses

performance and ability to perform functions and adaptability to changing situations. The nature of leadership and tactics of leaders differ group to group, depending on the situation, structure of group, attitudes and needs of members and expectations of the group by external environment factors. (23) (See Dutton (34), Schmidt(112))

Carter (21) reports that leaders' behavior varies also by group task. Thibant and Kelley (126) suggest various tasks and their consequences for group functions. Specific needs for group maintenance also influence leadership behavior.

Fiedler (40) found "that the effectiveness of groups is contingent upon the appropriateness of the leader's style to the specific situation in which he operates and upon the degree to which that situation enables the leader to exert influence." He offered three alternatives for changing the group situations as related to styles of leadership. 1) Change the leader's position power, 2) change the task structure, 3) change the leader-member relations. Fielder suggests that his study provides a possibility for management to utilize available leadership and managerial manpower.

Carter (21) reports that certain kinds of behavior were more typical of leaders while other kinds were displayed more often by ordinary members, and the actions of designated leaders were not exactly the same as those of leaders who emerged from the group to take the leadership. For example, leaders of discussion groups did not differ from others in the amount of helping with work, performing simple work units, etc., whether appointed or elected, but emergent leaders seemed to be more authoritarian than were appointed leaders.

Cartwright and Zander indicate that consequences of different leadership procedures can be predicted regularly, then group performance based on specific criteria can be correlate with selection of leaders. (23) (See Cock and French (27)) Reports are that management's "Theory Z" concept has developed

which advocates components of Theory X and Y. (109)

The role of the adult educator is changing. Axford (2) and Knowles (72) call him one who performs in a "helping role" whose function is developmental--toward helping his clients achieve their full potential. His responsibilities extend beyond routine, rather, they entail involvement of his clients in analyses of aspirations and those changes required to achieve them, diagnoses of obstructions in reaching their aspirations and effective strategies for desired results. He is guide, helper, consultant, resource, encourager. (72, 112)

The section began by stating that the leadership in groups can no longer be based only on the type of leadership; rather, on the way an instructor views learning to take place, the group situation and institutional functions. Emphasis in research is currently on the functions--tasks and maintenance--of different kinds of groups, and demonstrates that, in varying interactional situations, leadership styles and functions should and do change. In adult education, the role of leader has altered also. Instead of developing expertise on one leadership style, educators should rather develop their expertise in examining the instructional climate, assessing the independence level of the group and the group's functions. Will the group need direction, content and/or process? What are the expectations and other forces brought by the members into the instructional setting? Educators must also examine their own values and personal capabilities to alter their roles to meet the new challenge.

Clientele Involvement in Planning

There are at least three times in the planning process when there is a need to consult the learner in groups. The basic need for the course or program usually comes about through awareness of learner interests and needs. Another time might be prior to or during the first session of a course in which

learners come into the learning setting. At this time learners' specific needs and problems are sought in order to develop with them a meaningful program. A third time is when their involvement in the planning of the specific experiences to meet their needs is sought.

> It is this author's premise upon reviewing the research that adult educators need to take a much closer look at what is happening within, to and around adults in the group when they begin this process. It is the author's belief that in practice educators are negligent. They do not provide time for group cohesiveness; they neglect to build cooperativeness. They forget about social realities and group standards. Indeed they themselves may be the culprit when groups fail to reach their goals.

How many times have instructors, upon beginning a class, put people into small groups directly? How many times have they begged time limitations rather than allowing a break? Educators often ask groups to function before they are ready, by polling their ideas on problems minutes after they see each other, or asking persons who have never seen each other to choose a reporter or discussion leader. They often wonder why one group comes back prepared to report, and another, after 20 minutes, has no report and says "we just began working." There are examples all around us of ways they, as educators, fail to use principles which are known to help groups form, develop cohesiveness, select leadership, establish norms.

If learners were provided time for these processes, good results usually can be expected. A two day workshop of which the author was a participant/planner is a good example. Groups were formed by a number system 1-8 with five members each. The psychologist, turned project director, was the leader. For the next two hours groups played at being a group working on puzzles, relevant and related games on our subject, choosing a name for their group, and such. After those two hours one could FEEL the small group cohesiveness which spread throughout the whole group. The participants then got down to their tasks of problem solving. They never had a more productive

meeting. Four years later the participants still remember it. But the reader should know, it took the leader two hours in a planning meeting to convince the planners they would not be wasting the participants' time.

Cartwright and Zander explain that a group is a set of persons whose relationships make them interdependent. Members coming together into a group must develop norms and standards. Members projected into groups need time to develop these dynamic forces which operate on individuals to bring them into the group. "Boundaries of membership" need to be established. Sometimes persons can move into groups, leave or encounter resistence. But time is needed for a group to develop its cohesiveness. (23)

"Cohesiveness is the result of two sets of component forces acting on members to remain in the group--attractiveness of the group and attractiveness of alternative memberships." (24) There are four principle consequences of group cohesiveness: a) retention of the members; b) influence on members; c) participation and loyalty of members; d) security of members in the group. (24)

As members engage in interaction, they exert influence on one another. A person's capacity to influence others and to shape the plans constitutes his power in a group. The many differences of an individual's power effect both his behavior and that of others toward him. Zajone cautions that the presence of others effects individuals in a complex manner and may generate stressful and ambiguous situations. (140)

Groups differ with respect to the bases and distribution of power afforded to and among its members. Leadership in these groups is afforded by the group because a person moves the group toward their goal. Each group will differ in how leadership is distributed and the functions required. Where group goals assume greater importance than do individual goals and there are ambiguities obscuring the way to attaining these goals, an authoritarian leader

will be sought. Where ambiguities are not of a stress-creating nature, not standing in the way of goal attainment, and the attainment of group goals is not seen as a necessary prior event to the attainment of individual goals, a more democratic leader will be sought. (76) (Also see White and Lippitt (135))

Personal goals for the group are developed by group decision from which a group goal emerges. This procedure takes into account the combining of individual preferences. A compromise is necessary by the individual of his preferred and the non-preferred goals in which he literally combines his reference group attitudes and the membership group attitudes. (118) The result if achieved affects the motivation of members to contribute to the goal. Greatest motivation results when each member's individual goals have been successfully brought into the resultant group goal. Greatest attitude change occurs when a successful combining of membership and reference groups goals have been achieved by each member. (118)

Groups may succeed or fail in achieving their goal based on group functioning and self esteem of members. Group functioning and self esteem in turn relate to the rationale for achieving group cohesiveness--that is loyalty of membership and participation, and demonstrated support for individual goals.

The difficulties in achieving group goals are numerous and difficult. (See Boyd (16)) Aronson and Mills (1) following up on Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance found that persons who undergo an unpleasant initiation to become members find the group more likable. (Also see Radloff (104)) Arousal and reduction of dissonance in groups was investigated by Festinger and Aronson (36) who advises that group members who suffer through a breakdown in their beliefs together, will, by engaging in mutual social support and proselytizing new members, be able to reduce dissonance sufficiently to enable themselves to maintain their beliefs. Those not with them when the breakdown occurred were unable

to maintain their beliefs. For example when new members join their group. (41)

Janis' well known report of soldiers indicates when under stress the men did band together. (62) He suggests that educators may apply this to non-military groups. It is interesting to note, however, that after the flood in Rapid City in which great stress was placed on all families, social workers were reporting an increase of those families seeking counseling and applying for divorces. A good research question might be: At what point in stressful events does the group break down?

In this section the author has suggested that upon reviewing the wealth of literature available to educators in the process of involving the clientele in planning, they have been neglectful in the way they have performed. They have not in general applied the information available in actual practice. They have not provided their learners the time nor opportunity to develop group cohesiveness, to develop norms, to select leadership. In the curriculum development process educators have assumed this process will take place, and it will, but they could assure more positive and effective consequences if they include in their steps the "development of group cohesiveness" as a prelude to initiating task oriented opportunities and on a renewal basis throughout the development process.

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It should be noted here that besides the group inquiry literature presented, a wealth of literature exists on this concern in the group action area and group technique area of group dynamics. For example, Beal and Bohlen's work on Social Action, Biddle and Biddle's work with the Community Development process, Hiemstra's work on the Educative Community, to name only a few, fall into the group action area. In the area of group techniques, adult educators have been writing since the early part of this century on human relations,

techniques of discussion, structured experiences for human relations training, by men like Pfeiffer and Jones, Lippitt and White, Matthew Miles. These men have seen value in training leaders to effectively develop group cohesiveness and cooperation. Though many educators are aware of these writings, one can ask, why haven't they been used? Might it be because their applicability might seem vague for the educator who meets clients in different groups. Other information is available on the operation of group standards, on communication, on cohesiveness, on political structures, on power and on group aspirations. (51, 52, 53)

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Designing Methods and Techniques

There are nine formats for group learning described by Knowles. ( )

Action Projects	Clinic Institutes and Workshops
Clubs and Organized Groups	Conferences and Conventions
Courses	Demonstrations
Exhibits, Fairs and Festivals	Trips and Tours
Large Meetings	

Interaction among the members of large groups for one, occurs in pairs, triads, buzz groups of four, discussion groups of four or more. There are debates, dialogues, interviews, symposia, panels, group interviews, dramatic presentations, lecture, film, A/V presentations and visual aides which demonstrate the variety of ways educators can use large groups to enhance learning experiences. The literature supports the use of each of these formats for particular reasons. (101)

Consider the small group. Of the many forms of methods and techniques available, one is imperative--group discussion. Though group discussion may be old hat to some, thwarted by others, (98) seen as the demise of the group method

by others

> this author proposes that "discussion" is the most viable interaction process that educators have when working with groups. Indeed it is not "discussion" itself which is the culprit. It is the way in which it is used.

It might please some persons, who object to the term "discussion," if the name is thought of as "interaction and action via communication." For as human beings, individuals communicate to socialize, to carry out tasks, to develop personal feelings of trust, to develop group cohesiveness, and to learn. When in their "field" are individuals not accepting some form of verbal, non-verbal or overt (manifest) input?

Questions arise concerning the size of the group and when it is practical not to use small group discussions. From the author's view, after reviewing the literature, an "instructional group" may be compared to a "mass" in terms of numbers and possible controllability. (113) Persons normally do not deal with "mass" except in political arenas, on television or when dealing with "mobs" as masses of people. Thus, where there is control there is a possibility of engaging in group discussion.

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There have been a large number of articles in Adult Leadership over the years which describe methods in small and large groups. (132, 110) Verner provides a wide overview of methods, processes and techniques in his book. (130) Axford's new book, The Open Door; (2) Johnson's chapter in the 1970 Handbook of Adult Education (120) and other practitioners are helping to close the gap on more obvious needs to have information on methods and techniques. Some were noted previously. Many questions still remain.

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Knowles has offered new demensions for the use of small groups. His vivid analysis of the steps in the instructional process include six types of

activity units available to designers of programs. One is small groups and he lists fifteen different ways to use small groups. A review of this list indicates that consideration has not been given to the many alternatives for using small groups.

Discussion is not the only reason for the small group. Activity groups (71), task groups, and groups with assigned tasks or problems achieve more cognitive learning. (75) Research has shown that discussion alone supports attitude change. (124) Hare and Borgatta (51, 52, 53) provide lists of more than a thousand references on methods with small groups.

The actual concrete behaviors in the group--how things are happening, rather than what is being talked about--are bases of group processes. Whether discussing merit ratings, textbooks, course content or task, certain processes basic to all groups are taking place.

The reason or goal of the group must be agreed upon and this process takes time. Members of the group must exchange ideas understandably through the process of communication. A process of systematic problem solving and decision-making must take place or the group will waste time. The members must develop harmonious relationships with each other through the processes of getting acquainted and developing mutual support. Group processes are going on all the time, not just when the leader decides to use the group discussion process.

Discussion is the most viable interaction process we have as educators. It is how things happen in groups rather than what is being talked about that is important. This is not to say that it should be used for process value alone. Rather with an understanding of the value of interaction and action via communication in the development of group processes, adult educators will select methods for and with the learners which provide for a more effective learning climate. A significant consideration for educators follows. That is, what concern have

educators had for developing the arts of communication and listening by learners? The active process of discussion involves these componants. Effective use of these components would enhance the group process and the learning experience.

Selecting the Learning Experiences

In the process of planning learning experiences with and for adult learners educators are guided by learners individual needs and experiences, the content to be organized, their understanding of the effectiveness of learning in groups, and alone, among other factors. It takes hours of deliberation to develop an effective plan to meet the individual needs of the learners by providing viable learning experiences in groups.

> It is this author's premise that as adult educators become more informed about group processes and group phenomenon that they will increase their effectiveness of designing learning experiences which account for individual differences among the members of a group--Individual differences as they interact with group phenomenon.

How can educators bring this about? They know that through the use of individual interviews to diagnose individual needs, discuss desired achievement levels, obtain a general social and academic profile of participants, they can understand the learners individually.

What happens next? It is through the use of various grouping patterns, based on certain tasks, educators can evaluate the kinderdship of the members relative to goals, preference of membership, group functioning, commonness among members, power of group to influence members, retain members, degree of participation and feelings of security among members. To do this, there are observation charts, evaluation charts to have members evaluate "how mature is your group?" "how effective is your group?" and "How does the group function?" (102)

The concern is to help group members build cohesiveness as a prelude to their effectiveness as an operating group. It is also the instructor's task as leader to develop means for individual expression of goals by learners.

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As tasks, problems, discussion or work assignments for small groups are provided, choices need to be provided by levels of interest and experience. For example, if there are five groups, provide at least three different levels of problems and ask the learners to select the one(s) of interest and appropriate for them. As tasks, work assignments, are designed for individuals, provide for choice of decision on individual tasks.

When several reports are due to be made by individuals and printed copies are available for distribution to everyone, provide a workshop format offering two presentations at once so that choices need to be made by each student, and the presentor feels that the persons really want to hear what he has to say or they could go to the other group.

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There are many sources for understanding groups uniformity, pressures and standards, but the education field provides the proper perspective. Tough (127) has provided learners' reactions to working in groups. These pros and cons relate directly to how the learner sees his needs and goals in relation to the group goals. Stubblefield notes that need identification diagnosis is an effective tool for improving the effectiveness of learning in task groups whose success depends upon achieving a high degree of collaboration using the abilities and ideas of each member. Effective group operation is promoted by making data available about group behavior based on standards accepted by the group. (121)

Morse emphasizes that, in guiding classroom relationships, groups attitudes do affect individual learning which can be facilitated or blocked. For example, if the spirit of the class is based on discussion and cooperativeness, and students are then asked to write a test alone, students demonstrate stress and panic. If the class is built on competition and independence, and group

projects are introduced, class members do not feel free to produce. (96)

Motivation is the key to learning conscious or unconsciously. Motivation is infused within the individual-group relationships. Horwitz demonstrated that when the individual accepts the group task, he is motivated to complete the task. When the individual goal differs from the group goal, personal tensions are aroused which need to be resolved. Diagnosis and guidance of group and individual relationships is a vital concern of the leader as he plans the learning experiences. (59)

Through group interaction, members tend to develop common bases of social reality, expectations, beliefs or standards. The degree to which a person accepts these as his own will depend on how "attractive" membership in the group is and thus related to cohesiveness. A person who deviates from the group beliefs and values will be rejected by the members. The individual must be helped to find another group which he accepts and the members accept him.

Thus the goal is not sameness but motivation of individual concerns. (72, 89) For it is, in the end, the individual evaluation, the individual opinion and feedback which accounts for the learning experience's effectiveness. This relationship--Individual-Group-phenomenon--is a area in need of study by adult educators. For they have a responsibility both to the individual and group. It follows that educators need to come to grips with the problem of selecting learning experiences which enhance both the individual learner motivation and learning as well as the effectiveness learning in groups. Each learning experience should support rather than block learning effectiveness.

Carrying Out the Learning Experience

Leaders must enter the instructional group with the notion that they wish to be a part of that group. They also are learners. An instructor is one resource on the content being explored. He acts as organizer, supporter and

engages in other roles which are functions of a member of a group. Educators must also recognize the expertise of the other group members.

> This author's premise is that if adult educators can internalize the concept that they are a member of a learning group, a member who has been given the role of leader, uses the expertise of the group members, builds on known knowledge of the group members that they will become more effective facilitators of learning and in particular more effective in helping adults learn how-to-learn.

There is another premise to support this. The author believes that more than any other field, educators of adult and continuing education do support the belief and work very hard at helping adults learn how-to-learn.

There is an additional step--acquiescense of group membership. Granted, by admitting they are members of learning groups, they take risks. However, the fact that they allow themselves to be exposed to groups at all is risky.

As learners and instructors meet together, instructors take their place in the group. Instructors are, by the nature of the group phenomenon, a part of the instructional group. They perform tasks for the group. The leadership of this group, as any other, must be earned based on the fact that instructors move the group toward its goal. They involve the learners in planning their learning experiences designing appropriate methods and techniques. The research and literature which has supported the other four sections concerned with application has meaning for this section. The implications and concerns for developing and using effective group processes support the notion that instructors are group members. The author's premise would follow that notion, instructors must internalize the fact they are members of the groups they lead and deal with it as an instructor. This is their challenge.

Perhaps in these pages information has been provided which will increase the understanding and awareness of the means for applying the literature and research data as it pertains to adult learning groups. Perhaps in this the readers may decrease some of the risks of coping with the adult instructional group.

In Conclusion

The intent of this paper was to facilitate the understanding and application of known knowledge regarding adult learners in groups through a review of the literature and research of adult education and contributing fields of study. The paper focused on the psychological concerns of adult learning groups from an instructional viewpoint. It has been suggested that adult educators 1) develop expertise in examining and working with varied functions and tasks of leadership as they relate to groups, 2) provide for the development of group cohesiveness as a function of the curriculum development process, 3) strive to develop varied group interaction and action opportunities as methods, 4) select learning experiences to facilitate both individual and group learning effectiveness, and 5) recognize that each adult educator as instructor is a member of the groups ~~they~~he leads, to best facilitate adults learning how-to-learn. In doing this, the transportability and applicability of current research and literature on the group phenomenon has been suggested.

Adult educators/practitioners have played a big role in developing the body of knowledge about groups. The three conceptual bases of the field of Group Dynamics may be used as a model for codifying the voluminous amount of data related to groups as well as one means of examining the interrelationship of each area to the other. Each area appears to be supported within the field of adult education.

One fact of life becomes increasingly clear. Adult educators need to write books on this topic. There are so many new books, publications and journals that provide valuable information but the data seem too distant. There is so much new information that in all practicality a brief paper can not do it justice. And yet, the author read with dismay the 1970 Handbook of Adult Education (120) looking in vain for information on contributing disciplines.

Social-psychology and sociology are two of many disciplines which contribute to the field of adult education. More concerted efforts need to be made to apply the information, and interpolate its meaning in adult education terminology. This would be a most practical way to ensure transportability.

Thus, the author proposes that the AEA via some one of its sections appoint a Task Force of many people who will write one component each on the applicability of the various disciplines, or part of a discipline, to adult education. What will result, to be sure, is at least a twenty volume report which would be the most valuable set of reference materials of our field. Indeed, in that, Adult Education will have come of age.

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